



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish;
From 'Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest'

ASTRAGALUS TERMINALIS **RAILHEAD MILKVETCH**

Railhead Milkvetch is a tufted perennial herb with several erect stems that are 5-30 cm high and arise from a taproot. The pinnately compound leaves are 5-20 cm long with 13-21 oblong leaflets that have blunt tips. Foliage is sparsely covered with gray hairs that branch at the base and spread in opposite directions appressed to the surface of leaves or stem. Inflorescences are borne in the axils of upper leaves and have 10-30 spreading, crowded flowers that become more remote as the plant matures. The white, pea-like flowers are 12-16 mm long, each with a reflexed upper petal and a purple-spotted lower petal. The calyx is covered with white or black hairs and is 4-5 mm long. The glabrous, ascending, cigar-shaped pods are attached directly to the calyx at the base, are 3-sided in cross section, and are 15-20 mm long. The alpine ecotype is much smaller than plants from the valleys. Flowering in June-mid-July.

ASTRAGALUS TERMINALIS is similar to *A. SCAPHOIDES* and *A. ATROPUBESCENS*, but can be distinguished by the lack of a stalk attaching the base of the pod to the calyx, while fruits of the other 2 species have stalks that are 3-20 mm long.